

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IOE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 DHA-02
AF-10 ARA-14 EA-12 EUR-12 NEA-10 OIC-02 INT-05
/124 W

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0443

INFO USMISSION USUN NY IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 GENEVA 7117

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM

SUBJ: SUB-COMMISSION ON THE PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND
THE PROTECTION OF MINORITIES (S-C) - AGENDA ITEM 5: THE QUES-
TION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF PERSONS SUBJECTED TO ANY FORM OF
DETENTION OR IMPRISONMENT

REF: A. STATE 196303 B. GENEVA 7016

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT SUBMITTED BY THE INTERNA-
TIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL (NGO) 18 AUGUST FOR CONSIDERA-
TION BY THE SUB-COMMISSION UNDER AGENDA ITEM 12.IIT WAS READ
TO S/C AFTERNOON OF 19 AUGUST.

2. QUOTE

"THE AMERICAN INDIANS HAVE SUFFERED THE LOSS OF HUGH PER-
CENTAGE OF THEIR POPULATIONS, MOST OF THEIR LAND BASE, MUCH
OF THEIR CULTURAL INTEGRITY, AND THEIR BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS.

"THOSE FORMS OF AGGRESSION AND SICRIMINATION AGAINST
NATIVE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE CAUSED SEVERE POVERTY AND ALIENA-
TION. THEY HAVE ALSO CAUSED JUST RESISTANCE ON THE PART OF
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THE NATIVE AMERICANS.

"THOSE TWO FACTORS IN TUR (POVERTY AND ALIENATION, AND
RESISTANCE) HAVE CREATED A SITUATIIN WHEREIN UNUSUALLY LARGE
NUMBERS OF AMERICAN INDIANS FIND THEMSELVES IMPRIOSNED IN
THE PRISONS OF THEIR OPPRESSORS.

"THERE IS A VERY REAL SENSE IN WHICH ALL OF THESE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN PRISON CAN BE CONSIDERED POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ALMOST EVERY COUNTRY OF THE HEMISPHERE. IN FEW CASES ARE THEY TRIED BY A JURY OF THEIR PEERS OR ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN LAWS AND CUSTOMS.

"BLATANT RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IS EVIDENT BY STATISTICS SHOWING PERCENTAGES OF INDIANS IN PRISONS COMPARED TO PERCENTAGES OF OTHER RACES AND NATIONALITIES, LENGTH OF SENTENCES COMPARED TO LENGTH OF SENTENCES OF NON-INDIANS, AVAILABILITY OF PAROLE AND OTHER STANDARDS.

"THE SITUATION IS UNIQUE IN THAT IT CONVERGES TWO WHOLE CONTINENTS AND IN THAT THE UNITED NATIONS HAS SO FAR CONSIDERED THESE PROBLEMS AT A MINIMUM LEVEL. IT SEEMS APPROPRIATE THAT THE SUB-COMMISSION ON PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND PROTECTION OF MINORITIES BEGIN TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER THE URGENT PROBLEMS OF INDIANS IN PRISONS.

"THIS PAPER IS CONCERNED PRIMARILY WITH THE SITUATION OF NATIVE AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA BECAUSE MUCH INFORMATION ON PRISON CONDITIONS IN OTHER AMERICAN COUNTRIES IS ALREADY AVAILABLE.

"IN THE UNITED STATES, AMERICAN INDIANS MAKE UP LESS THAN ONE PER CENT OF THE POPULATION. THEIR OVER-ALL WELFARE IS UNCLASSIFIED

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SOME FIVE TIMES LOWER THAN THE UNITED STATES STANDARD. POVERTY IS SO SEVERE THAT MORE THAN 75 PER CENT OF ALL INDIANS IN THAT COUNTRY SUFFER FROM MALNUTRITION, UNEMPLOYMENT IS CONSTANT AROUND 75 TO 80 PER CENT, ACCORDING TO UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT REPORTS.

"THIS IMPOVERISHMENT LEADS TO LIVING CONDITIONS AND HEALTH PROBLEMS WHICH ARE SHOCKING EVEN WHEN COMPARED WITH THE WORST URBAN SLUMS. EIGHTY TO 95 PER CENT OF INDIAN HOUSING IS DILAPIDATED, MAKESHIFT, UNSANITARY AND CROWDED. THESE TRAGIC CONDITIONS LEAD TO THE DESPAIR MANIFESTED BY SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES, ALCOHOLISM, AND SUICIDE RATES WHICH HAVE REACHED ALMOST EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS.

"PROBLEMS OF PAROLE (CONTROLLED RELEASED FROM PRISON)

"IN THE OVER-CROWDED PRISONS OF THE UNITED STATES PRISONERS WHO HAVE SHOWN THAT THEY HAVE BECOME REHABILITATED ARE ELIGIBLE FOR PAROLE - RELEASE UNDER SUPERVISION - AFTER SERVING A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE OF THEIR SENTENCE.

"THIS SYSTEM DOES NOT WORK FOR NATIVE AMERICAN PRISONERS,

HOWEVER. ONE REASON IS OF A CLEARLY POLITICAL NATURE. A
YOUNG NATIVE AMERICAN IMPRISONED IN THE STATE OF MICHIGAN,
WROTE THE FOLLOWING LETTER:

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IOE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0444

INFO USMISSION USUN NY IMMEDIATE

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"SINCE THE CONTROVERSIES OF THE WOUNDED KNEE TAKE-OVER
ON PINE RIDGE RESERVATION ONLY ONE OUT OF FIVE INDIANS HERE
HAS BEEN PAROLED, AND EVEN THOSE, PAROLE WAS ALMOST MANDATORY.
WE ARE FEELING THE EFFECTS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPRESSION AT
WOUNDED KNEE, AND THAT IS ALWAYS THE TOPIC OF THE PAROLE
BOARD'S INTERVIEW WITH THE INDIAN INMATE.

"JUST AS DISTURBING IS THE INSTITUTIONALIZED RACISM IN
THE UNITED STATES, WHICH IN THE INSTANCE OF PAROLE DETAINS
INDIANS IN PRISON MUCH LONGER THAN EITHER BLACK OR WHITE
CITIZENS ARE DETAINED. NOT ONLY ARE AMERICAN INDIANS GIVEN
LONGER SENTENCES FOR THE SAME CRIMES, THEY ARE HABITUALLY
DENIED PAROLE.

"AMERICAN INDIANS IN CANADA

"AMERICAN INDIANS IN CANADA CONSTITUTE 2.5 PER CENT OF
THE GENERAL POPULATION. THEIR SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
ARE FOR THE MOST PART SIMILAR TO THOSE OF AMERICAN INDIANS
IN THE UNITED STATES, WITH ONE DIFFERENCE BEING THAT A
MUCH HIGHER PERCENTAGE LIVE ON FEDERALLY-DESIGNATED RESERVES.
(70 PERCENT AS COMPARED TO 30 PERCENT IN THE UNITED STATES).

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GENERALLY INDIAN PEOPLE HAVE AN INCARCERATION RATE THAT IS FOUR TIMES THAT OF THE GENERAL POPULATION.

"THE SITUATION OF AMERICAN INDIANS IN UNITED STATES PRISONS CONSTITUTE OBVIOUS VIOLATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS, GENOCIDE, ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, AND THE CONVENANTS ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS AND CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS, AND OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER ITSELF. THE SITUATION REPRESENTS THE MOST THOROUGH, INTENSE, DELIBERATE, AND IGNORED RACISM IMAGINABLE.

"THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA KNOW WELL OF THE SITUATION AND ARE DOING NOTHING TO ALLEVIATE IT. ACTION MUST BE TAKEN AT AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL.

"THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA HAVING FREELY ENTERED INTO TREATY AGREEMENTS WITH THE INDIANS AND THEREBY RECOGNIZING THE INTERNATIONAL STATUS OF INDIANS WITHIN THEIR BORDERS, MAY NOT CLAIM THAT RACISM AND DENIAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS AGAINST INDIANS IS AN "INTERNAL AFFAIRS". UNQUOTE.VANDEN HEUVEL

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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THE QUES- TION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF PERSONS SUBJECTED TO ANY F
TAGS: SHUM, US
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Type: TE
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